

Regarding proceeding 04-405

Apparently BellSouth has requested that they be relieved of the requirement to sell DSL service to independent Internet Service Providers (ISPs). The requirement was put in place to prevent the telephone companies from becoming monopolies with respect to DSL service. It seems that BellSouth's argument is that the restriction didn't work. That is, they have such a large percentage of the market that putting a few independents out of business by refusing to supply DSL won't seriously impact the market place. In other words: "The rule didn't prevent us from becoming an 80% monopoly, so why not let us become a 100% monopoly?"

I'm sure I don't need to lecture you about the evils of monopolies. I have been a very happy customer of an independent ISP for several years and have listened to many complaints from acquaintances about the poor service provided by SBC. Small businesses are the engines of innovation. Letting "the phone company" be the sole provider will seriously limit that innovation and have an overall detrimental affect on the quality and feature set of DSL service in the future.

Bob Boller  
Benicia, California